

Soper Public School

Homeless Children and Youth

The Soper School recognizes its obligation to ensure that homeless students have access to the same educational programs and services provided to other students. The school shall make reasonable efforts to identify homeless children within the district, encourage their enrollment, and eliminate existing barriers to their attendance and education, in compliance with federal and state law and regulations.

The Soper School may waive policies, procedures, and administrative regulations that create barriers for enrollment, attendance, transportation and success in school of homeless students.

“Homeless children and youth” means students who lack fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, and includes:

1. Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
2. Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
3. Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
4. Migratory children (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this section because the children are living in circumstances described in this section, clauses A through D.

School of origin is defined as the school the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled.

ENROLLMENT, RECORDS AND IMMUNIZATIONS

Federal law provides that homeless children and youth, individually or through a parent or guardian, may choose to attend the school in the area in which they are currently living. The district will determine whether a student is a homeless child or youth for purposes of establishing residency and promptly advise the parent, guardian or person having legal custody of the child of the decision, both orally and in writing, if possible. If there is no such person, the liaison will advise the student. The district will enroll each homeless student and permit his or her full participation in all school programs, whether or not the student is accompanied by a parent, guardian or person having custody of the child, and without proof of residence, current immunizations and traditional enrollment documentation, such as school records and medical/immunization records. The district's homeless liaison may assist the student and school in obtaining those items. A parent, guardian or person having legal custody of the child who disagrees with the school's determination may appeal the decision to the board of education under the procedure identified in this policy. If there is no parent, guardian or person having legal custody of the child available, the student may appeal the decision.

APPEALS PROCEDURES

The district will make every effort to resolve disputes regarding homeless children at the lowest level possible by utilizing the following process:

1. At the time a homeless student seeks enrollment, the district will notify the student or his/her family of these procedures and provide the student/family with a copy of this policy.
2. The district will promptly notify the district's liaison that a homeless student seeks enrollment, and will seek to involve the liaison in decisions regarding the student's education.
3. Students/families who disagree with a decision regarding the student's education may meet with the liaison for an informal resolution. The liaison will notify the student/family that a written complaint may be submitted within five (5) days (or longer if agreed upon by the parties).
4. If the liaison receives a written complaint, the liaison will prepare a decision (plan of action) and provide it to the student/family within five (5) days of receipt of the written complaint. The liaison will also notify the student/family of the right to appeal.

5. Students/families who are still dissatisfied with a decision regarding the student's education may file a written appeal with the superintendent within five (5) days of receipt of the coordinator's plan. The superintendent will meet with the student/family within five (5) days of receipt of the appeal. The superintendent will issue a decision within five (5) days of the meeting with the student/family. The superintendent will also notify the student/family of the right to appeal to the board of education.

6. Students/families who are still dissatisfied with a decision regarding the student's education may file a written appeal with the board of education by submitting a written notice to the superintendent within five (5) days of the superintendent's decision. The appeal will be placed on the next agenda (or the following agenda, if the appeal is received after the agenda posting deadline) and the board's decision is final at the district level. Students/families who are still dissatisfied with a decision regarding the student's education may file an appeal with the Oklahoma State Department of Education utilizing the procedures established by the OSDE.

Approved and Adopted by Soper Board 12/9/2019